

## Ep #112: In Your Body



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With Your Host

**Natalie Brown**

## Ep #112: In Your Body

This is *Weight Loss Success*, with Natalie Brown, episode 112.

Welcome to *Weight Loss Success* with Natalie Brown. If you're a successful woman who is ready to stop struggling with your weight, you're in the right place. You'll learn everything you need to know to lose weight for the last time in bitesize pieces. Here's your host, certified life and weight coach Natalie Brown.

Hello, everybody. Every week as I sort of open up to knowing what needs to be shared on the podcast I notice things in my world and I listen to what my clients are struggling with. And there's usually some theme that emerges and it's really clear what I want to share. So, I had a moment with a client this week that was just that. It's really simple but profound and it will be a short and sweet podcast. I just really want to offer you a concept to kind of mull over and a practice that I want you to try.

So first of all, if you haven't read or listened to *More Than a Body*, do it. This practice I want to share with you comes from this book and the work of the authors, Lindsay and Lexie Kite. It's brilliant and it is groundbreaking work on the concept of the objectification of our bodies that is, I think, really important and actually maybe kind of necessary for every woman to be familiar with, to understand, to learn more about. So read their book, follow them on Instagram at Beauty Redefined. You're welcome. Lots of gems there, lots of learning for you.

We have been unknowingly separated from ourselves by an idea that we've been sold that as women our bodies are our value and our body's value as in how it looks. When we are only or mainly focused on what it's like to look like we do and we spend little time focused on how we feel walking around in our bodies we have disconnected from a critical part of what makes up who we are. The actual experience of being us in our bodies. And we've instead put on the lens of others.

As the Kite sisters say, there is you and there is the you that's being looked at. It's a separation. We're looking through the lens of others to view, and judge, and conceive of ourselves. How could this be? Well, think about it.

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Who experiences our body's appearance? Other people. The only way we experience our own appearance is when we see our reflection in a mirror or in a photo. But that's still us seeing ourselves from the outside as others do. So even then we aren't experiencing our bodies necessarily but only experiencing our perception of our appearance.

It's kind of mind bending, I know, you've got to think about it a little bit. But in that case you're experiencing the you that's being looked at rather than just being you. Have you ever heard or even repeated the common phrase, beauty is pain? As you walked around in uncomfortable footwear that was deemed 'work appropriate'. Or as you waxed your eyebrows or squeezed into some Spanx.

That is evidence to me of that disconnection, from the experience of being you, in order to facilitate the experience of looking a certain way for others, viewing pleasure. When you put on too tight pants that don't fit but they're the right size you think because you can't be a double digit, heaven forbid. Or high heels, or even a big sweatshirt or a shirt in the summer. And you look in the mirror, you're probably not thinking about the waistband cutting into you, or your feet or ankles hurting, or how hot you're going to be.

You are most likely thinking, does my butt look too big? Or do my calves look good? Or is this hiding my tummy well enough? Now, I'm not anti any of these things I just mentioned nor do I think that they are problematic, or wrong, or anything else. I simply want to emphasize the point that we often put our physical bodies through pain and discomfort in service of how we look and that encourages that separation from our bodies for appearances sake. It encourages us to identify as the one that is being looked at.

This is a part of what leads us to overeating and to using food to numb and avoid discomfort. We are so used to disconnecting from the physical experience of our bodies and so focused on the importance of our bodies looking 'right' that we ignore how food feels in our bodies and how much food our bodies need. So how do we reconnect? How do we remind ourselves to come back home to our bodies? How do we prioritize our

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physical lived experience over the externally perceived one? There are many ways but I'm just going to mention two simple ways today.

One is to talk yourself back into your body. And the other is to get into your own senses. When you notice you are being split, you are focused on how you look to others rather than how you feel to yourself. Have a compassionate conversation with yourself. For example, this is from the book. Wait, I can feel that I'm picturing myself being looked at instead of just living. It's so easy to do but I deserve more than this. It does not matter how I look right now.

I deserve to look out and see the sky, the people walking past, and feel the air on my skin. I deserve to breathe for a moment and think about other aspects of my life. You can find a mantra of even a few sentences like that, that bring you back to your body. Another simple way is to tap into your senses. This is my favorite way of getting present, whether it's to be present in my body in order to ride the waves of uncomfortable feelings I'm having, instead of distracting myself away from them.

Or be present in my body to notice my hunger and satiety cues so that I can nourish my body sufficiently. I love to pause, put my hand on my heart and just take in what I'm hearing, smelling, seeing, feeling on my skin etc., just kind of check-in with each one of my senses. That brings me right back to this moment, to my body, to what it's like to be in my body and I can kind of center and get focused on what's next, what I want to eat, what's going on for me, all of that.

So, when you notice you are caught up in thoughts about how you look right now, or even how you look in general, tap into your senses. If you're walking or out and about, notice the rhythm of your feet taking step after step. Notice the colors around you. Notice the way the trees move or what the car tires sound like as they move across the pavement. Put your hands in your pockets or let them swing by your sides, or even squeeze them together. Look at other people and notice their expressions or the color of their clothes rather than imagining what they think about how you look.

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When you get dressed in the morning and you notice things aren't fitting the way you want them to, and you notice hopelessness or frustration creeping in. As the Kites say, "Remind yourself that you are privileging an onlooker's perspective of your body. Repeat to yourself that you are more than a body, that you are in fact a human who reserves the right to a body that grows, and shrinks, and changes. And then step back into your body as your own. Turn away from the mirror to help you reunite with your body as an insider instead of being an outsider looking in."

A few of my favorite ways to do this, once again a hand on my heart, or even both of my hands on my heart, eyes closed and then I focus on my breath. I like to take five intentional physiological sighs which feel like a quick double inhale and a short pause and a longer exhale. So, it sounds like – and it's something we naturally do oftentimes when we're reading a text like a paper text, a book.

There's actually some science to show that it doesn't happen when we're reading on our phone or on a tablet. It does happen when we're sitting and holding and reading a book, just a little plug for paper books. I really like to still hold a book in my hands. But that's just, it's a break, it's a relaxing, there's lots of physiological reasons why our brains naturally do that. But I like to kind of do an intentional one or five. So, a quick double inhale, a short pause, a longer exhale. And then I just think about the sensation of filling my lungs with air in and out.

You can visualize a balloon inside of your body expanding and contracting, a light shining brighter and dimming. All sorts of ways that you can sort of focus this time. But even just five breaths can get you centered, to step back into your body and be experiencing what it's like to be in your body instead of looking at your body, or being looked at.

Another way to do this is to stretch. This doesn't have to be anything fancy. We don't have to do some big long elaborate 15 minute stretching session. You can just reach an arm over your head and lean to one side, and feel the stretch in your oblique muscles, or your sides. Do that both ways. Turn your hand, palm up, and pull your fingers down and back with your other

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hand so you feel the stretch in the tendons of your wrist. Even just point and flex your feet.

Think about what it feels like to stretch and to move as you do this. Your focus will be on the present, on your body, what it feels like to be in it, that's our goal. Another way is to feel your muscles, the strength of your muscles, do some lunges, do some squats, even rise up onto your toes a few times. Focus on how it feels to use your muscles, the strength of each fiber at work. Find gratitude for each part of your body.

I like to keep this neutral because I know sometimes for some of you it's going to be really difficult to find gratitude for your stomach, or for your backside, or whatever part of you that you don't like. But if you can think about different parts of your body, even inside parts and what they do for you, or make possible for you, like what your eyes have seen lately, where your feet and legs have taken you. Think about your heart beating nonstop without a single rest for all of your life.

Think about your favorite music or the sound of the ocean. Concentrate on your body individually and as a whole and what a miracle it is, and how amazing it is in all the ways that you can think of. Generate some gratitude for the parts. When you notice you're separating, get back into your body. Connecting to our bodies is one of the most powerful steps we can take on our health and weight loss journey in general.

Treating your body as an object, as an ornament, ignoring its nuance, its preferences and its power, that keeps us disconnected and just repeating the cycle of disrespecting it and punishing it over, and over, and over again. Or focus on how our bodies look and how it's 'wrong' often holds us back from showing up in the world the way we want to as well.

So, this is also from the Kite sisters. We've all been taught that our bodies are a problem. So, we opt out of opportunities and experiences to fix ourselves so that we can qualify to show up next time. We prioritize the life of an imaginary idealized version of ourselves who is designed to be unattainable. The myth that life begins once you fix your body is powerful,

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it's escapable, and it's ruining our lives. It hurts our body image. It hurts our self-worth, our collective progress as people who deserve to live and lead right now.

You don't have to feel good about your body to qualify to do the things you want to do once you feel better about yourself. Showing up even when you feel self-conscious is what improves your body image. You will feel better about your body as you use it and it gets easier with time and practice. It's time to reclaim your life and your body as your own.

I want you to ponder this last sentence. What would it look like for you to reclaim your life and body as your own? I think that part of it is us reconnecting to how it feels to be in our bodies. I think that's a really important step we need to take. But think about what it would look like for you to reclaim your life and your body as your own. What would it be like for you to spend more time in your body and less time thinking about how it looks to other people? I want you to try it on this week.

Notice when you're separating, when you're disconnecting, when you're thinking more about how it looks and how it feels. And try some of these exercises to step back into your body, and reclaim it as your own. I want more than anything for every single woman to be able to love her body and stand fully in it as the miracle that it is. I want every woman who is struggling with her weight, and her health, and wondering how she can love herself and want to change to know that it is altogether possible if you work from the inside out.

I want to provide a place for any woman to feel safe to learn, and to feel, and to explore, and understand herself with some expert guidance and a community of support. If that's what you're looking for I've got you. Head to [itbeginswithathought.com/apply](http://itbeginswithathought.com/apply). Okay lovely humans, have an awesome week. I'll see you soon.

Thanks for listening to this week's episode of *Weight Loss Success* with Natalie Brown. If you want to learn more about how to lose weight for the

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last time, come on over to [itbeginswithathought.com](http://itbeginswithathought.com). We'll see you here next week.